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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ABIDJAN 000669

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STATE FOR AF/W AND PRM/AFR/CACHANG  
STATE PASS TO USAID/OFDA/DDEBERNARDO  
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SUBJECT: MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT FOR IRC LIBERIA:  
SPRMC006CA190

¶1. Summary: The Abidjan-based Refugee Coordinator (RefCoord) for West Africa conducted a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) assessment of the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) PRM-funded project, "Integrated Protection and Assistance to Support the Reintegration of Displaced Liberian." RefCoord visited IRC offices and project sites in Monrovia, Zorzor, Yeala, Fissebu, Borkeza, Konja, Voinjama, and Kolahun in January and May of 2007. RefCoord is particularly pleased with IRC's education activities and encouraged to find so many IRC teachers who had previously worked with or were trained by IRC in refugee camps now working in schools spread throughout Lofa County. RefCoord believes IRC is on target to meet most of its indicators by the end of the project. End Summary.

¶2. The Abidjan-based Refugee Coordinator (RefCoord) for West Africa conducted a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) assessment of the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) PRM-funded project, "Integrated Protection and Assistance to Support the Reintegration of Displaced Liberians." RefCoord visited IRC offices and project sites in Monrovia, Zorzor, Yeala, Fissebu, Borkeza, Konja, Voinjama, and Kolahun in January and May of 2007. RefCoord met IRC staff Nathan Richardson (Country Director), Estelle Brumskine (Financial Controller), Lynn Bowers (Education Coordinator), Angela Bailey (IRC Monrovia), and Elijah Okeyo (Voinjama Field Coordinator). RefCoord also spoke to Raouf Mazou (UNHCR Representative) and Cesar Ortega (UNHCR Voinjama) with regard to field-level coordination with IRC and a number of other NGO staff working in collaboration with IRC.

#### OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

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¶3. OBJECTIVE 1: To reduce morbidity, mortality and disability through improved access to primary health care and water and sanitation services in catchment areas in Zorzor and Salayea Districts.

- IRC has conducted targeted health training sessions. IRC will not meet the figure of a 50 percent increase in knowledge, however, they do report an increase of more than 20 percent. Given the initially high pre-test scores, this should be considered as a positive result and having met the indicator;
- 100 percent of deliveries at health facilities received a TT2 (above target);
- IRC is on target for persons attending health sessions per month;
- Monthly joint supervision visits are conducted at each of the three health facilities;
- IRC has had trouble establishing an operational health

fund with one Community Health Committee. Health Committees have had to be completely reconstituted. IRC plans to establish this fund in Fissebu and will report on progress in final report;

- IRC expects to meet indicator for water consumption/person before end of project;
- IRC has met its target on number of water samples that have 0 faecal coliforms per 100ml at the point of delivery;
- IRC believes it will fall just short of its indicator for KAP survey respondents who use latrines;
- IRC stated it will meet the indicator on contributions to water committees, although assistance will not all be financial. For example, some committees will receive agricultural assistance that can be used to generate financial inputs.

14. OBJECTIVE 2: To improve prevention and response to gender-based violence through partnership with Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of Justice and stakeholders such as Women's Action Groups (WAGs).

- IRC reports it has met or will meet all indicators under this objective except for the indicator on conducting 4 training sessions per quarter for 115 persons from partner organizations. IRC reported it was too ambitious with this indicator. IRC stated it will organize four training sessions in the last quarter but organized only a total of four training sessions for the previous three quarters. Although IRC meets regularly with its partners, IRC reported it is difficult to generate interest in training activities when it does not offer sitting fees or other incentives.

15. OBJECTIVE 3: To improve access to quality education at

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five primary schools and three secondary schools in Zorzor and Salayea districts.

- IRC has met the first two indicators under this objective;
- IRC reported it might not be possible to report on its indicator for PTAs that generate income from income-generating activities due to the difference between the project cycle and the planting/harvest cycle. Most PTAs planted crops this past spring and will only harvest them after the end of the current project;
- The number of repatriating teachers (89) remains below the target figure of 200. However, IRC teamed up with UNHCR and the Ministry of Education this spring to offer a specific package to qualified teachers in host countries willing to work in rural areas. RefCoord is aware that many teachers have accepted this package and RefCoord met IRC teachers working in local schools throughout Lofa County in particular. IRC will report final numbers at the end of project;
- IRC has met its final indicator under this objective.

#### PROGRAM ISSUES

16. Cross-cutting Goals: The IRC project targets the health and education sector in its projects. Although many of IRC's training and health activities are geared to the larger community, IRC does give special attention to the needs of vulnerable groups within those communities. IRC-run schools in Lofa County have made significant progress over the last two years and school enrollments are up, thus providing direct benefits to children. IRC has significant non-PRM donor resources in Liberia and is well poised to carry many of its activities through the relief to development transition phase in Liberia.

17. Coordination: IRC decided to withdraw as an implementing partner with UNHCR during the project cycle. This ruffled some feathers within UNHCR. Part of the reason for this decision might have to do with the significant amount of non-refugee funding sources and its interest to move into

longer-term activities. However, IRC and UNHCR are currently looking at areas where they can still work closely together. The joint IRC-UNHCR-Ministry of Education package offered to teachers in countries of asylum willing to work in rural areas is a good example of continued, though more limited, cooperation.

¶8. Effective Use of Funds: RefCoord and other PRM staff have come across IRC teachers throughout Lofa County and in some areas of Bong County. These are teachers who were either trained by or worked with IRC in refugee camps in Guinea and Sierra Leone. IRC support to bring these teachers back and their responsive management of a number of schools in Liberia under this and previous PRM-funded projects, has been a determining factor in supporting return as a viable and durable solution for Liberian refugees. Likewise, IRC-run clinics, alongside other NGO-run clinics, provide critical and reliable support to the health care system as the local and national health infrastructure comes back on line. IRC is also one of a core group of NGOs in Liberia that have taken a leading role in promoting GBV issues.

¶9. Sphere Standards: IRC applies SPHERE standards in its health and wat/san activities.

¶10. Financial and Personnel Systems: IRC has been able to identify and release employees involved in financial mismanagement through its own internal controls. RefCoord believes current Monrovia and field staff appear more engaged than in previous years and have improved supervision of field level activities. IRC Monrovia reports strong coordination with its HQs and conducts regular monitoring visits to the field.

¶11. Coordination with PRM: IRC's new Country Director, though fully engaged, has sometimes failed to communicate emerging problems with PRM. This seems to be mostly linked to the PRM-funded SEA project, but it has taken him time to adjust to the idea of having a regular, working relationship with the donor. Nevertheless, RefCoord has found the IRC staff easy to work with and requests for additional information easy to gather. RefCoord and PRM Washington staff in January found one of the IRC schools to be suffering from obvious management problems during a joint visit with IRC. IRC responded by meeting with the PTA after our visit and then dismissed most of the school's administration as a

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result of the issues the PRM team found. Although it would have been better not to have arrived at such a point, this demonstrates IRC's willingness to respond to PRM's concerns when real issues are identified. IRC has submitted all progress reports on time.

¶12. Security: IRC reported concern with security at its office in Kolahun and was taking steps to improve its security profile at its compound. IRC staff abide by the UNMIL midnight curfew in upper-Lofa County.

¶13. Problems: IRC reported an increase in malnutrition and TB cases at a referral clinic it had just taken over from ICRC in Kolahun. IRC is coordinating a response in cooperation with WFP and other NGOs on the ground. The only other significant problem reported involved the decision to withdraw as a UNHCR implementing partner as mentioned above.

COMMENT  
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¶14. RefCoord believes IRC is on target to meet most of its indicators by the end of the project. RefCoord is particularly pleased with IRC's education activities and encouraged to find so many IRC teachers in schools spread throughout Lofa County. Although IRC has moved quickly, and visibly, into areas of upper-Lofa County, RefCoord does not believe IRC alone can meet all the needs within the various

local communities, despite their decision to, "go-it-alone" with UNHCR. At the same time, PRM has encouraged its partners to diversify their donors as our funding begins to decline. IRC, with its broad donor base, has positioned itself well to make the transition from relief to development in Liberia.

HOOKS